

# HISTORIAN

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OF HANCOCK COUNTY

*Bay Saint Louis, Mississippi*

November 1998

## NOVEMBER HAPPENINGS

The November meeting of the Hancock County Historical Society will be held at noon on Thursday, November 19 at the Kate Lobrano House, Bay Saint Louis.

At that time we will hold the election of Board Members. The nominees are:

1st Vice Presidents (2): Ames Kergosien and Roland Schexnayder

Secretary: Cathy Benvenuti

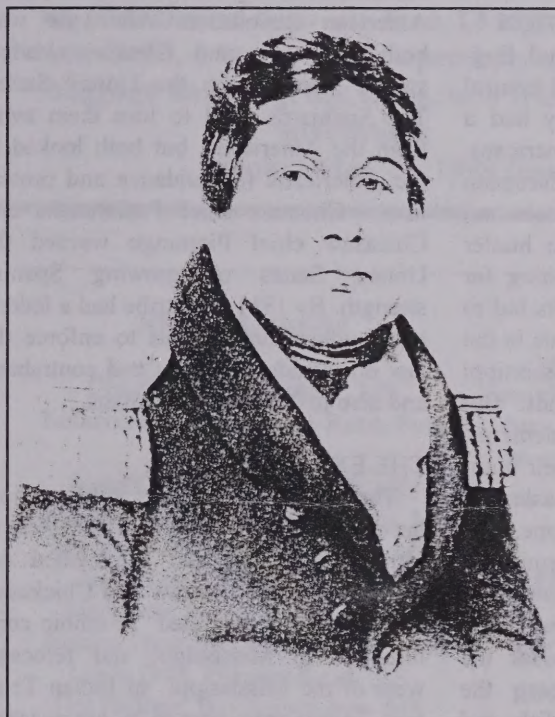
Membership: Marlene Johnson

Publicity: Edith Back

Treasurer: Meg Hilliker

Nominations will also be taken from the floor before the vote.

Call 467-4090 for luncheon reservations at \$6.00. Please call early to assure your reservation and to help us plan seating.



## PUSHMATAHA

Pushmataha was one of the most spectacular Indian leaders of all time. He was a Mississippi Choctaw who became a Lieutenant Colonel in the U. S. Army, aided the United States in the war against the Creeks, signed the Treaty of Doak's Stand, and was given a full military funeral in the Congressional Cemetery.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Based on the donations and crowds at Cedar Rest Cemetery Halloween night this year's attendance was larger than ever – 756. Our ever-popular Dorothea Martin received guests at the entrance in her "Nearly Departed" persona and, clutching her donations basket, elicited excellent donor response.

Beautiful portrayals of prominent citizens from our past were: George Arbo by Art Bailey, Jr., Ester Petit Grenner by Becky Rotundo, Joseph Labat by Eric Labat, Elihu Carver by Greg Boutwell, Harriet Jordan by Ruth Thompson, Reine Helluy de Montluzin by Linda Bynum, Eaton J. Bowers by Gary Taylor, Anton G. Osoinach by (See **President** on page 3)

## MISSISSIPPI'S INDIANS AFTER THE EUROPEAN INTRUSION

Through the centuries the Mississippi tribes had developed a self-contained life style sufficient for their needs. The European intrusions beginning in the middle of the 16th century brought drastic change to the tribes and ultimately an end to their aboriginal lives.

Among the early European visitors was the Spaniard Hernando de Soto, who led a column of conquistadors across the Southeast in 1539, entering Indian country. The Indians eventually tired of their demands for grain and other needs and in 1541 attacked the Spanish compound, killing several Europeans, destroying equipment and finally forcing them out.

Next came the French from their settlements in Canada and the Northwest. In 1673 the Joliet Marquette party met several Mississippi tribes during its reconnaissance down the river. In 1682, a party of Frenchmen and Northern Indians, headed by Robert Cavalier de la Salle, contacted several tribes as they passed down the Mississippi River. LaSalle's arrival signalled an effort by France to develop the resources of the region, exploit the water route and thwart the English. In 1698 two English traders with a pack train of goods arrived in eastern Mississippi and began trading with the tribes, offering cloth, guns, powder, shot, beads, knives and other items. The Indians traded deer skins and Indian captives who were shackled and marched to Carolina and sold as



slaves on the plantations.

In 1698 the Bishop of Quebec sent two missionaries to the tribes and in 1699 Pierre LeMoyne Sieur d'Iberville sailed into the Gulf. To check English influence, he invited Indian leaders to accept French dominion. The three populous tribes – Choctaw, Natchez and Chickasaw willingly did so.

#### FRENCH – ENGLISH COMPETITION

The struggle between France and England for political and commercial control over the lower Mississippi valley had a destructive effect on the Native Americans. Their increasing consumption of European goods and reliance on English tools and weapons changed the subsistence hunter into a frantic businessman, searching for items to trade. As demand for pelts led to extermination of fur-bearing animals in the area, some hunters crossed the Mississippi in search of new hunting grounds. But many hovered near the French settlements, eking out a degraded existence, their numbers decimated by smallpox, measles and venereal disease brought from Europe.

The slave trade virtually exterminated several small tribes. The Chickasaw were fierce warriors and excellent hunters who collected rich pelts and captives for the English. French attempts to force the Chickasaws to abandon the English and expand agricultural settlements in Natchez lands led to a series of bloody French-Indian wars in Mississippi, having the effect of integrating certain tribes and scattering others. By 1731 the Natchez nation had been erased. Between 1736 and 1752 war on the Chickasaw raged but the French were unable to dislodge them.

#### SPOILS OF WAR

The Seven Years' War between France and England ended with the Peace of Paris in 1763. The British received the eastern half of the Mississippi valley, and its Indians were received into British dominion.

Indian lands were administered by British officials who set rules on trade and protected the tribes from encroachment by settlers in West Florida. A rush of immigrants from the British Isles, West Indies and the American seaboard colonies followed the

British takeover, traveling through Chickasaw and Choctaw territory with many squatting on Indian lands. Indian leaders demanded that the British survey their lands, set boundaries and expel intruders.

#### THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

The British made use of Indian warriors in blockading American units in the American Revolution. After the war, both Chickasaw and Choctaw leaders signed treaties with the United States. The Spaniards tried to lure them away from the Americans, but both looked to the Americans for guidance and protection. Choctaw chief Pushmataha and Chickasaw chief Piomingo warned the United States of growing Spanish strength. By 1811 each tribe had a federal agent whose duty it was to enforce the law on intruders, traders and contraband and also to "civilize the Indians."

#### THE EXODUS

The history of the tribes in Mississippi between 1795 and 1837 is a chronicle of retreat, land loss and diminished domains, until the Choctaw and Chickasaw nations were annihilated as ethnic communities in Mississippi and relocated west of the Mississippi in Indian Territory. Events were shaped by organization of the territory of Mississippi, expansion of American settlements, and pressures by settlers on the federal government to reduce tribal domains and open new lands. The admission of Mississippi to the Union in 1817 created for the Choctaws and Chickasaws an impossible situation with an inevitable outcome.

Despite threats to their existence, the tribes confirmed their loyalty to the United States by disregarding Tecumseh's attempts to involve them in his confederation to make war on the States and also by providing fighting men for American armies.

Great pressure was applied by settlers to government officials to force the Choctaws and Chickasaws to surrender their lands. Rather than a total surrender of tribal domains and removal to Indian Territory, it amounted to a piecemeal

nibbling at Indian lands until only a small core of each remained. Those remaining were subject to public and private, legal and illegal pressure, intimidation and exploitation, until tribal leaders, disillusioned and cynical of government treaty obligations, prepared to leave.

Between 1816 and 1837 a series of treaties ceded millions of acres of Choctaw and Chickasaw domains in return for encouragement to evacuate to Indian Territory in the West.

The Choctaw Nation was liquidated by the Treaty of Dancing Creek in 1830. The Chickasaws signed a total cession in the Treaty of Pontotoc in 1843.

Eventually the Chickasaws joined the Choctaws and colonized the western portion of the Choctaw Nation in Indian Territory.

(From Gibson, Arrell M., *The Indians of Mississippi, in A History of Mississippi*, Vol. 1, Richard Aubrey McLemore, ed., University and college Press of Mississippi, 1973.)

#### MEMORIALS

Patt Cucullu has made a donation to the Historical Society's permanent fund in memory of her sister, Lovice Wilson.

Mrs. Wilson was known to many of us as "Doots". She was an active member of the Historical Society until recently when failing health forced her to limit her volunteering. She will be missed by her many friends.

Jean Reeves was a gentle friend and a member of our Board of Directors.

Donations have been made for a brick to be engraved in her memory and installed at the Tercentenary Park next August. She was always ready to lend a helping hand and will be sorely missed.



**President from page 1**

Ames Kergosien, Paul Delcuze by Robert Delcuze, Joan Newman Seal by Ruth Chambers and Katherine Maynard Lobrano by Patt Cucullu.

We wish to express our appreciation to those mentioned above and to our hostesses, Marlene Johnson, Barbara Zitzmann, Edith Back and Meg Hilliker.

Serving as guides for the tour were Linda Henrie, Jim Henrie, Clarice Gustin, Norma Jean Soroe, Charles Gray, Bill Flores, Jo Anne Mumme, Jerry Ingraham, Chuck Ingraham, Melinda Richard, Jack Richard, Rick George and Evie Gordon.

Cemetery Set-up crew were Richard Johnson, Bill Flores, Rick George, Lynn Cucullu, Brehm Bell, and Pete Benvenuti.

Refreshments were provided by Margaret Arnos, Virginia Ludwig, Sally Lind-sley, Melinda Richard, June Murphy, Clarice Gustin, Ruth Good, Mollie Malpie, Dottie Hodges, Rita Fraering, Danna Piazza, Nick & Petie Hyman, Ruth Thompson, Evie Gordon and a host of other members and friends who brought caldrons of candy and cookies.

If I have neglected to mention anyone in the madness, please forgive me. Every donation of service or goods was appreciated.

Clayton Borne, Jr., grandson of Katherine Lobrano, came over from Metairie as usual for the Halloween tour of the cemetery, and also as usual, he made a generous donation to the Historical Society's permanent fund.

Mary Jean Lee James donated us a copy of her book, *Footprints on the Sand of Time*. It is a biography of the family of Felix M. Lee and Myrtie Spiers and gives a very comprehensive history of several prominent Hancock county families.

Bob Daniels brought us a copy of his new book *May it Please the Court, a Collection of Legal Episodes*. Mr. Daniels is a well known (retired) court reporter who "took part in many court proceedings and was also a witness to much of the behind-the-scenes drama that defined the era" as quoted from the fly-leaf of the book.

The book depicts a number of murder and rape trials and other legal cases, but especially interesting is the detailed trial of Cowboy Dale Morris for the murder of

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Mary Jean James, Picayune, MS  
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Dot Phillips, Bay Saint Louis, MS  
Cornelia Fuller Cichon, Bay Saint Louis

### Dues are Due

We have enclosed self-addressed envelopes for use in paying your 1999 dues. Your expiration date is shown on the address label of this newspaper.

### LOBRANO HOUSE HOURS

MONDAY	8 a.m.
through	to
FRIDAY	4 p.m.

Charles Flink.

Mr. Daniels will hold a book-signing at Bookends on Saturday, November 28 at 1 p.m. This is a gripping non-fiction book that you will not want to miss.

Alberta Beyers donated copies of the 1924-1926 issues of *The Sea Sprite*, the year-book for St. Joseph Academy. She is residing in Woodland Village at Diamondhead.

It is reported that Stephen Ambrose is recovering from serious injury resulting from a fall in Wisconsin. He has been a strong supporter of our society since building his home on South Beach Boulevard in 1985. We hope he will soon be back in Bay Saint Louis.

Charles Gray

THE

## HISTORIAN

OF HANCOCK COUNTY

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Edith Back

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**HANCOCK COUNTY  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

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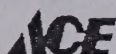
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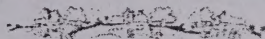
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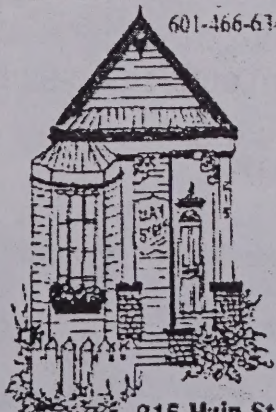
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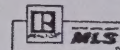
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